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ABSTRACT

A companion report provided a summary of what was learned from surveys of principals and staff developers about the newly created position of staff developer in the middle schools of the San Diego City Schools, California. This study investigated the spring followup study that asked teachers what they thought about the new position and the work of the staff developer. The report is based on interviews with 42 teachers, 8 principals and assistant principals, and 9 staff developers from 8 middle schools. Findings support those of the previous report. Teachers describe the focus on literacy provided by the staff developers in a positive light. Many see the impact that effective implementation of the framework is having on students. Teachers appreciated the staff developers, and thought they would be less successful without their on-site professional support. This report also contains teacher responses to the implementation of the genre studies program, part of the school district's reform efforts that was designed to focus on students who are falling behind. Genre studies efforts are less directive and more student-centered. Teachers noted that the approach requires students to be more actively engaged in their learning and to take more responsibility for themselves. They reported genuine commitment to the approach and its new strategies, although they noted many difficulties in implementing the new approach. (SLD)

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Implementing Standards-Based Reform in San Diego City Schools
Update Report: August 22, 2000

Written By

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I. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This update report is a companion to Education Matters' report of February 15, 2000 in which we provided a summary of what we learned from our interviews with 14 middle school staff developers and 15 middle school principals in December 1999, four months into the first year of implementing the staff developer role and the genre studies course.[1] In that report we concluded that San Diego demonstrated a very successful initial implementation of the staff developer role at the middle school level from the perspectives of staff developers and principals.[2] This was an important finding, we wrote, that bode well for the future of the role. We also wrote that we would return to the district in the spring to talk to teachers about a) working with the staff developers and b) trying to implement genre studies in order to fully evaluate the early phase of implementation. In order to understand the work of the staff developers, we asked to talk with a range of teachers with whom they were working. The sample of teachers included entry grades teachers (6th or 7th grade) who were teaching genre studies and a few teachers from other grade levels who had sought to work with the staff developers. In addition, we spoke with the staff developers who worked with these teachers and with the principals of six schools. As a result, this report is based on interviews with forty-two teachers, eight principals and assistant principals, and nine staff developers from eight middle schools.

The findings from Education Matters' May 2000 visit confirm and support the findings reported in our February 2000 report. In fact, we can use the same words to describe teachers' responses to the district's literacy focus and the role of the staff developers that we used in that report.

> [Teachers] overwhelmingly describe the focus on literacy in their schools in a positive light. Many see the impact that effective implementation of the framework is having on students, reporting, for example, that students' attitudes toward reading and learning are changing, students' self-esteem is rising while discipline problems are decreasing, and the quality of student work is improving....teachers are also excited about the changes that they are seeing, and...in some cases teachers' perceptions of the capabilities of lower-achieving students are also changing (February 2000, p. 27).

Teachers also reported that the work they were attempting was difficult, all-consuming and, often, stressful. They appreciated the staff developers and suggest that they would be far less successful without their on-site professional support. Teachers also appreciate much of the other

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[1]The San Diego City Schools "BLUEPRINT FOR STUDENT SUCCESS," March 14, 2000, highlights genre studies as a literacy strategy designed to prevent students from falling behind. It says, "The two-period genre studies course will provide students with the time they need to participate in a workshop format where they can read and write using a wide variety of materials, including nonfiction text selections covering social studies and science topics. Genre studies courses currently are being offered for all sixth-grade students in middle school and all seventh-grade students in junior high school. (Pp 18-19)

[2]Neufeld, B., Kuwahara, Y., and Swanson, J. "Update Report: Implementing Standards-Based Reform in San Diego City Schools," February 15, 2000.

professional development in which they participated, for example, workshops and classroom observations of genre studies in action. In particular, teachers value what they have learned from Janet Allen, a consultant whose middle school orientation infuses professional development with useful knowledge and skill.

Of course, teachers vary in the extent and quality of their implementation of the strategies embedded in the Literacy Framework and the Genre Studies program. Some have invested terrific effort into their implementation and are pleased with their progress. Others have invested terrific effort and are still struggling. Some teachers are embracing the literacy strategies more cautiously; still others remain reluctant. New teachers, especially, often had to become more skillful with classroom management techniques before they could take on the complexities of implementing readers and writers workshop, for example. Nonetheless, the findings from our interviews and observations strongly suggest that teachers value the new strategies as well as the support provided from the staff developers. They recognize that the literacy framework and genre studies are "works-in-progress" and, therefore, not fully developed. While teachers regret that they cannot know all they need to know about implementation and district expectations at the outset, they recognize that the district, too, is struggling to advance the reform and refine it at the same time. Most important, in our view, we heard no comments that suggest that teachers disagree with the district's focus or suggest that it is ill-informed. [3]

However, even with their positive orientation to the district's push for new literacy strategies, and even with their great appreciation of the staff developers, teachers raise concerns about their opportunities to learn what they need to know and about the extensive time and energy they need to devote to their genre studies work. In particular, teachers talk about a) inconsistent messages from consultants who provide professional development workshops, and b) the enormous demands of developing new genre studies units while teaching another new unit with new strategies for the first time. Many in our sample desired more central office support and/or involvement with genre studies curriculum development. Teachers also spoke of the enormous stress associated with implementation of this new and, for so many, different approach to literacy instruction.

At the same time, we want to note two issues raised by teachers in data we collected during the 1998-1999 school year, that no longer seemed salient. First, we reported last school year that teachers were unclear about what the literacy strategies actually meant for practice because professional development had left them confused about how to actually implement, for example, Read Alouds. We heard no concerns about the meaning of the literacy strategies and how to implement them by May 2000. Now, teachers seemed to understand the strategies and how to

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[3]We recognize that our sample is positively skewed by our attention to teachers who have been working with staff developers during the 1999-2000 school year, for the most part, because they agreed to such an involvement. We do not have interviews with teachers who were reluctant or unwilling to work with staff developers. As we noted in our 2/00 update report, staff developers and teachers will face great challenges in the next year as the work of implementing genre studies includes teachers who are more reluctant and/or explicitly resistant to the district's approach to improving literacy instruction.

do them even if they did not feel fully adept at their implementation. As a consequence, now teachers were concerned about how to implement the strategies in conjunction with genre studies.[4] We consider this concern with "putting the pieces together" a sign of progress.

Second, during the 1998-1999 school year, we reported that although teachers agreed with the direction and content of the Literacy Framework, they objected to the top-down process, the speed with which they were to make significant changes, and the real sense that their work was being monitored for compliance more than for support in a context in which they had insufficient professional development opportunities. Some teachers and principals also objected to the feeling that there was only one way to implement each strategy, that the one-size-fits-all approach was the district's conception of reform. In May 2000, teachers reported that, although the reform remains top-down and is being implemented quickly, a) staff developers provide real, appropriately focused professional development support, and b) they have opportunities to make local adjustments to the strategies in light of their own and their students' needs.

In the context of these overall findings, we begin this report with Part II, a review of teachers' overall experiences a) working with staff developers, in general, and b) specifically, implementing genre studies for the first time. We include in this section a discussion of aspects of implementation that pose challenges for teachers and areas in which they would like additional help. In Part III of the report, we focus on staff developers' views on the progress of implementation and the challenges that face them in helping teachers implement genre studies. This section updates the analysis we provided in Education Matters' February 2000 report. Finally, in Part IV, we review our findings and suggest areas that may need further attention in the context of a very successful first year implementation of the role of staff developer and the strategy of genre studies.

II: TEACHERS' WORK WITH STAFF DEVELOPERS

Many factors contributed to teachers' positive views about first year implementation of the staff developer role and the genre studies approach to literacy instruction. First, we reported in February 2000 that staff developers had looked forward to using their role to build a collaborative culture focused on instruction in their middle schools. Teachers reported that collaboration has increased and that the staff developers have had a strong role in making that happen. Second, staff developers were often known by teachers because a) they were drawn from the school's pool of teachers and/or b) were chosen by the school. This helped with the initial buy-in to their work. Staff developers who were new to their schools were able to establish themselves in a short period of time. Third, staff developers were successful in introducing their role into the schools. The processes that they used, described in our earlier report, were generally quite effective. In particular, the Institute's decision to have staff developers work with experienced teachers who wanted help and/or with brand new teachers, enabled them to establish themselves with a willing set of partners. However, after the positive

[4]We will more fully describe this issue later in the report.

initial entry was complete, it remained up to the staff developers to provide teachers with support that actually helped them do a better job of teaching. Our data reveal that staff developers were successful in this regard. In general terms, teachers reported that staff developer help has been invaluable, particularly in supporting the implementation of genre studies.

Before we turn to the data that support this conclusion, we want to note that the staff developers could not have been successful without the support of the teachers. Just as teachers have a difficult time teaching students who resist them, staff developers would have had a difficult time working with teachers who were unwilling to undertake the work of reform. During the first year of implementation, teachers and staff developers both worked very hard to make their work successful. Our data reveal a genuine collaboration in which the staff developers supported the teachers in improving their instruction and the teachers enabled the staff developers to be successful by embracing the knowledge and skill they had to offer. In other words, a strong professional culture grew among the teachers and staff developers who worked well together during the 1999-2000 school year. We turn next to an analysis of teachers' overall experiences working with the staff developers. Then we focus on their work with genre studies, in particular.

Teachers' Experiences Working With Staff Developers

There are many factors that contributed to teachers' positive perceptions of staff developers. **Overall, staff developer credibility stood on a foundation of their personal and professional qualities.** Teachers described them, for the most part, as being a) focused on implementing genre studies but flexible in what they expect from teachers, b) knowledgeable about the literacy framework and how it might be applied in classrooms, c) skillful at providing feedback about teaching, d) willing to adapt their knowledge to individual teachers, e) capable of garnering considerable teaching resources, and f) comfortable admitting what they do not know and seeking answers to teachers' questions.

This foundation of personal and professional qualities was strong because **staff developers brought to their work credibility as teachers of urban students, often as teachers of low-achieving urban students**.[5] Whether or not they were already known in their schools, once teachers saw that the staff developers could, indeed, demonstrate effective teaching with their students, they more readily welcomed their support. Some teachers pointed out that they tested the staff developers by asking them to demonstrate a new technique, for example, with a particularly difficult group of students. As the following teachers' comments reveal, the staff developers' success with students and acknowledgment of the challenges associated with teaching them enhanced their credibility.

> I gave [the staff developer] my most challenging students. I thought, number one, she's going to struggle with the discipline because she hasn't had to do discipline.

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[5]Some staff developers worked primarily with GATE classes prior to taking on their new roles. However, most quickly demonstrated that they also had the knowledge and skill required for working with low achieving students.

> Not so. She was right on top of everything. She didn't miss a trick. Number two, [the staff developer] jumped in and was demonstrating many wonderful techniques, using stickies, teaching me about self to text. I'd never heard these terms. She taught me those things. She modeled them with my class, my most difficult class. [She acknowledged at a school professional development session] that what she learned in my class is how very difficult it is for teachers when you start something day one and the kids that are absent day two and aren't there to get the next step. And then they come back day three, and what do you do with those kids that missed day two? So [the staff developer] is one of us. (Teacher R)

> The thing is, she's an experienced classroom teacher. And that's what makes a difference. Because she knows how to adjust things to fit an individual class or an individual group of kids without staying in some rigid mold that won't work. Maybe you have to "up" the level of difficulty or maybe you have to cut it back. Maybe you have to break it into smaller pieces. Whatever. She can see what needs to be done and be flexible to make those adjustments. (Teacher FF)

> Her expertise, her knowledge, her work ethics, and her professionalism are truly outstanding. I think that without pushing it down people's throats, she's able to demonstrate how valuable [these strategies are]. And just because the Institute says we're doing it, some people might resent that. But with [the staff developer] they don't. ....It's truly amazing what [the genre studies teachers] accomplished this year at [this middle school] we've kind of been in the forefront at [this school] And she has pushed to get it further, pushed it much further. (Teacher W)

> She makes it as fun as possible because she's really not intimidating. She always is looking for how to make it easier for teachers. And, she shows you the way to do it. And, the best thing is she mode!s it. And that's probably the most important thing. And not just once; she actually modeled for five days [for me]... (Teacher KK)

Teachers reported that staff developers were readily available during the school day, before and after school, and, often, on weekends.[6] They worked hard and teachers both recognized and appreciated this commitment.

> She works long hours. We all have her phone number and, personally, I have never felt that she did not have time for me. She takes your concerns to heart. And if she can't help you right then, she takes it to her Friday [professional

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[6]There are teachers who do not have an opportunity to work with the staff developers because they are neither new nor teaching genre studies. When they can, staff developers do provide support for such teachers. However, were these teachers to be in our sample, we know they would not say that staff developers are readily available to them.

development] meetings and talks about it there and then brings you an answer back at the first opportunity she can. (Teacher EE)

We have lunch together every week and that's where we can come in and just kind of hash everything out or come in and show successes and discuss new things. And if somebody had something that really worked, they share it and then we'll take it and we'll use it in our classes. That has really been a good source of support and has boosted people's morale. [The staff developer] e-mails us and reminds of all of these little lunch meetings. She has taken the different aspects that we learned in the summertime and used them for our staff development training throughout the year. And reinforced them. She's come into our rooms and worked on special things with all of us, I think. She's always there for support. (Teacher D)

Staff developers' credibility as teachers and colleagues, their obvious interest in and sensitivity toward teachers, and their availability all helped establish them in their positions. These qualities laid the ground work for the professional development they provided throughout the year.

Professional development occurred in two different kinds of settings: 1. During department and/or faculty meetings where staff developers might demonstrate important reading and writing strategies, and, 2. In individual classrooms where staff developers might model new practices and/or observe teachers implementing them. Almost all of the teachers in our sample described both kinds of professional development in positive t[7] In addition, teachers' comments revealed their commitment to using what they were learning.

With respect to department and/or whole faculty professional development, **teachers pointed to the value of having the staff developers demonstrate the strategies rather than merely talk about them.** The demonstrations enabled teachers to experience some of what their students might experience and, as a result, think in more detail about how to initiate their implementation.

The first half of the year there was a broad topic for the month that would come out usually at our overall meetings. And then she would do a hands-on presentation herself related to something that we're working on in class, which is very good. (Teacher B)

She has run on our staff development days, a couple of in-services. Very low keyed, [it was] people who want to be there to find out about things. And it's been very relaxed. And we did shared reading one time. She went through a

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[7]A very small number of teachers found the whole faculty professional development sessions tedious and unproductive. Some of these sessions were done by the staff developer and some by the principal. A similar small number of teachers disliked having the staff developer observe them and provide feedback. They described the feedback as too critical and the staff developers' suggestions counter to their own judgment about how to teach.

whole shared reading with us as if we were the students. And I really appreciated that because I don't think that I had the right idea of shared reading because I haven't had the training. And so that was like a mini training right there, real fast. And it gave me a much clearer idea of what I should be doing in the class. (Teacher T).

The last time she did staff development, what she was doing sunk in more with me. [That happened] when she said [that] staff development is useless unless you're actually using these things in the classroom. That really got through to me and I started thinking, "OK, what has she shown me that I can use tomorrow?" So I did thick and thin questions the next day. And then I started implementing some of the things that she had said and I'd planned to do but I just hadn't planned to put them in right afterwards. We did those thin and thick questions. And then we did some Cornell notes. And I changed the bulletin board around so I could post the questions. And I've modified my questions according to Janet Allen's style of what is, sort of like a particular kind of assessment to see their progress in a book. We just happened to be at a good place to do that. (Teacher E)

Teachers also reported that staff developers' work in their individual classrooms – doing demonstration lessons as well as observing and providing feedback – had been very helpful. Teaching has been described as an isolated profession in which individuals work in private. There is little in established school cultures that encourages teachers a) to observe one another, or b) invite others into their rooms to observe and provide feedback. Staff developers, however, are required to observe and provide feedback. Without doubt, the prospect of making her practice public can make the most confident teacher nervous. Our interviews with teachers reveal that many of them have willingly opened their doors to staff developers and have found the risk worthwhile. Most reported that they value a) the staff developers' expertise at demonstrating new literacy practices with their own students, and, b) the feedback from the staff developers when they are observed trying new practices as the following teacher comments reveal.[8]

I started with her observing and us meeting afterwards and her giving me constructive criticism or feedback. Then I would say, "OK. I see what your saying. You're right. I can work on that." And, she would give me ideas and we would set up another time where she would come back and I would be doing what we talked about and then she would give me more feedback. I'd say, "Is that what we're talking about? Is that more on track of what we should be doing?" And then she would give me the feedback of, "Yes, that's right and don't forget to add this," or, "Oh, you were right on," or whatever that happened to be for that

[8]As noted earlier, there are teachers who are not yet willing to engage the staff developers in these kinds of activities.

day. ...For the most part, I think I've been on track all year and I owe a lot of that to her. Now I feel more confident. (Teacher G)

The first time [she observed] I didn't know she was going to come in so I was pretty surprised and I got kind of nervous. ...But the next time I was a little bit more calm. And her analysis, her writing down what you're saying and what's happening is a real eye opener to the person who reads it. Because they look at that and they say, "What did I say that for?" And, "Why did I do it that way?" [The teacher is] more analytical about their teaching when they see it written down on a piece of paper. And I've found myself thinking about what I said or what I spelled on the board more critically than I used to before she came in. I used to be [reflective] when [the principal or vice principal] came in, but not to the extent that I am with [the staff developer] because she's more critical than they are, in a way. She's looking for a strategy to help you so she's evaluating what you're using more than other people who might look at you or watch what you're doing and say, "Oh, that was fine. That was a great shared reading." But she might say something like, "Well, why did you choose that particular reading?" Or, "What was the reason that led up to this?" You don't get that from anyone else who comes in. (Teacher E)

I felt that seeing [the staff developer] show [the strategy] to my students, that helped me springboard into it. Because sometimes you don't know which way to go, but you've got to start somewhere. [She] gave me a way to start. Sometimes as teachers we are reluctant to try something new. And I feel that the peer coaches are here and I like them to demonstrate whatever avenue they want us to travel, their expertise in doing something and then we can just springboard from that and incorporate our own creativity. And that's what I've been trying to do based on what [the staff developer] has shown me. (Teacher H)

She has been indispensable to me. She has come in to observe me for several different reasons. I have a CLAD so I'm teaching English ESL [but that's not what I know well]. She's been able to help me with some new techniques and also take the kids a little bit deeper into the content. I came in having no real expectations of their abilities. ...She's helped me do literature circles. And again, I don't have any training on that either. But she's helped me kind of figure out how I can modify that idea for ESL. So that they are independent and they're picking their own books and taking on the roles. And then I can be moving around, working more closely with those kids. And the ones that are reading, but just at a low level, can choose books. It's actually been really successful. I've been extremely impressed and kind of surprised at how much they can do. So I feel like I've become so much better as a teacher just because of her leadership. (Teacher Q)

Some teachers pointed to the staff developers' skill in "pushing" them to do a bit more than they thought they could do.

> I don't know what you call the kind of person who pushes you in the pool when you think you can't swim and you can. That was the staff developer. Because there were places where it was time for us to try something new. I don't remember exactly what it was, maybe even just like conferring with kids. Whatever it was she'd say, "I really think you're ready, you should go for it." We're like, "Oh we don't want to." And she'd just say, "Just do it. Just try it." And we'd try it and it would work. We'd have to talk to her about what sort of worked, what didn't. She'd help us work out the things, the kinks in it. But just trying new things, she was there and encouraged us. We tried so much more so much sooner than we would have otherwise. (Teacher HH)

> [After we went to observe at another school] she said, "This is what it should look like." And I have not let go of [control of] my classroom yet. And she would come in and observe, and she would sit there. And she'd take notes. And then she'd observe more and take notes. And by the end of the week, I said, "What are you doing?" And then she sat down with me and she said, "Are you going to do the workshop or are you going to [directly] teach? Where are you going?" ... We had talked several times about: Is it a student centered classroom or is it a teacher centered classroom? I said, "I guess it's time, huh?" And we were concerned about the level of kids we were working with. Would be successful or would it be bedlam? And the kids have risen to the occasion and done real well. My kids talk about their schema and activating their schema. They talk about text to self and text to text and text to world. And they talk about their reading strategies. I never would have believed it. And she kept saying, "It will happen, it will happen." And it did. (Teacher PP)

These teachers attest to the helpfulness of the staff developer's feedback. Their comments also reveal their own willingness to try new strategies – even if they are difficult and risky – in an effort to improve their students' opportunities to learn. It has not taken very much time, in our view, for these teachers to get used to being observed and listening to feedback. Had the staff developers not become credible quite quickly and developed strong, collaborative relationships with the teachers, it is unlikely that this work would be moving forward as well as it is.

One important aspect of the collaboration is the fact that **teachers see the staff developers as flexible in interpreting the directives they receive from the Institute**. Teachers, principals and staff developers are fully aware that they are to implement a particular approach to literacy and that it has required components. No one has missed the top-down nature of the reform. However, within this context, staff developers have been able, for the most part, to help teachers implement the literacy strategies in light of their own approaches to teaching. According to the staff developers, sometimes this is a way to achieve the cooperation of a teacher with the hope that some of her old practices will diminish. At other times, staff developers may feel that the

teacher, indeed, is accomplishing the goals of the literacy framework with a slightly different, yet equally beneficial approach. In both contexts, teachers appreciate the sense that the staff developer is tailoring her support to the teacher's existing strengths. This perceived flexibility of the staff developers enables teachers to feel that they are in a partnership rather than on the receiving end of a set of rigid demands. However, teachers have not lost sight of the fact that there are expectations about their classroom practice as the following comments suggest.

> She's been very supportive in certain things. But we have had conversations where I've sat down and said, "You know, I like a, b, c, and d, but this [other point] is where we're going to have to work our way through this." And she's been very open. And not only very supportive, but we've come to some meeting and I've said, "This works better if you don't say that to me, if you approach me this way." I've noticed that if we're not doing [some strategy the correct] way, then it becomes, "Well, this is the way the district's going." And I can hear that. That means I've got to get in line. (Teacher I)

> You [and the staff developer] may have a different philosophy. And I think in the beginning we may not have been allowed to have that freedom [to adapt] as much as we do now. Now, we are putting into those plans our own feelings about our kids. And it has to have that piece. It can't all be a little cookbook for everybody's classroom. And the way we have structured things now, we're all having our input. Putting not only our personal thoughts, but what we know works best for our kids into this piece. And using our staff developer to help us based on our needs. (Teacher K)

> She and I would get together and sort of agree on a goal ahead of time for things that I wanted her to focus on to help me. And she would come in and observe and talk to kids and sit in on my conferences with children and things like that. And then we would meet afterwards for an hour and debrief and brainstorm ideas and make goals for the next time around. And she really left the door open for me to pick and choose areas that I felt like I needed to strengthen. So she's never actually imposed or even had to strongly suggest something to focus on, just because this is all new and so you're very aware of those yourself. ...I think that one of the strengths of my working relationship with the [staff developer] is a lot of the informal give and take that we have. I feel like we have really good communication with each other. I enjoy talking with her about the kids and teaching and what she's working on and ideas that she's been exposed to and publications. We seem to have that kind of dialog going all the time. And it's something that I appreciate and value greatly as a teacher at this school. (Teacher JJ)

In this context of very positive relations around observations and feedback, we want to note that a very small number of teachers felt overly criticized by the feedback from their staff developers. One teacher, for example, described her dismay at the discussion that followed an observation.

> I did not find that we worked well in the classroom for what she called modeling a lesson. When I've invited her back [to observe me doing the lesson], it was more of a critique of me rather than a help with joint teaching. I did not expect it. If that's what it was, then I should have known prior to that. And I do not always feel that her vision of her expertise is necessarily in agreement with other people's different types of teaching. I get the impression that her way is the correct way and mine and others is not correct. Which I think hopefully maybe will be addressed at some time because I do not hear from other teachers that it is getting any better. And that's going to make more hard feelings than positive. There are many ways to teach something. And the demonstrating, unless it is pointed out that this is exactly how the district wants you to do this, which she tells us is not the case. There's many ways to present different strategies, etc. Then I feel a critique should not be involved at all. (Teacher J)

Because of her experience, she was no longer willing to engage in this kind of professional development.

As teachers began to use the new strategies, they realized that they often lacked appropriate or sufficient materials to use with their students as well as for their own continuing learning. They described staff developers as especially helpful because of **a) the wealth of professional knowledge and material they brought to their work, and, b) their ability to draw on it for different purposes.** Some of that knowledge informed the staff developers observations and feedback sessions with teachers and their organization of formal professional development sessions. It also enabled the staff developers to supply teachers with resources that they could use with students. Given the newness of implementing the literacy framework and genre studies, in particular, teachers valued this aspect of the staff developers' support.

> If I need to do something on inference, she'll say, "Here's a couple of books you can use, or you can go in the library and they have these over here." She just has the knowledge of what we have available here. And I think that's because she was a teacher. ...When I started doing social studies in my class, she gave me all her stuff on Egypt and [told me] how to tie it in with the language arts parts, within the genre studies. She just always has an idea, and not just one idea. Like whatever will fit my style. (Teacher P)

> [The staff developer] is a wealth of knowledge; I mean she is incredible, a walking encyclopedia. The woman remembers everything. And that's been really good because she helps me recall things and introduces me to a whole lot of new and exciting things. (Teacher G)

> Resources have been really helpful. When we did fairy tales she brought in things at key points where we've kind of been stuck or saying, "Where do we go with this?" She brought us the descriptive writing lesson and from that we kind of

were able to go on and on. ...And then she's also a resource as far as reading issues: What do we do? How do we teach this particular strategy? (TeacherHH)

We had to develop our units, to put in all this new stuff. And I was on the phone every day or in [the staff developer's] office all the time saying, "I don't know where I could get this information." And she just kept finding tons of materials for me. And suggested books I could use for literacy circles. And throughout the year, that's what she's done. (Teacher EE)

For example, I was doing the newspaper articles and she gave me information on how to write newspaper articles that would be good for the kids to have. I did a section on theme for Call of the Wild and we talked about theme. She gave me materials that the kids could use for theme. And when we did reading non-fiction texts, she gave me a great piece of paper for the non-fiction text structures as well as we were working on persuasive texts and good information on that. So she's given me a lot of resources. (Teacher V)

Summary: Teachers' Overall Experiences Working With Staff Developers. These data provide unequivocal support for the conclusion that this set of teachers has found the support provided by the staff developers to be of high quality and pertinent to the work of genre studies teachers as well as other teachers who are implementing the Literacy Framework strategies. There are many reasons for the success of the partnership. As we stated at the start of this update report, teachers described the staff developers as credible, knowledgeable, skillful, and available. **Teachers reported that the staff developer provided useful professional development tied explicitly to the work they were doing with students.** As a result, teachers reported that they were often able to take what they learned, try it, and give feedback to the staff developer on implementation issues. The staff developer, then, could provide additional targeted assistance.

As a consequence of this partnership, teachers reported changes in the culture of their schools. They more willingly opened their doors to staff developers and worked more closely with one another in school-based professional development designed to improve their expertise with the literacy strategies. They became engaged in a joint enterprise in which the staff developers applied what they had learned to the specific school and teacher contexts. The 1999-2000 school year in San Diego saw an interesting mix of top-down direction from the Institute supported by informed grass-roots efforts to make local adaptations that would enhance implementation. This "flexibility," as some teachers called it, was a change from the completely top-down feel of the 1998-1999 school year.[9] It contributed to the partnership, to the collaborative work of the staff developers and the teachers.

The Institute's emphasis on having the staff developers work with teachers who wanted to engage in the difficult work of changing their practice certainly created and supported a cadre of

[9]A few teachers reported that, in contrast, principal-provided professional development was more directive and implied a top-down, compliance orientation to implementing the literacy strategies.

dedicated teachers at each school. They, along with the staff developers, should prove to be valuable resources as the district and schools turn their attention to scaling-up the reform to include many more teachers, some of whom may be more reluctant learners than the ones who stepped forward during the 1999-2000 school year.

III. FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCES: TEACHERS AND GENRE STUDIES[10]

Although genre studies is described in the "Blueprint" as a strategy designed to prevent students from falling behind, our evaluation sample includes both teachers who are teaching genre studies with students who scored in Quartile 1 and 2 (Q1-2) on the Stanford Achievement Test, Version 9 (SAT-9) and teachers who are trying it with students who scored in higher quartiles and/or are in GATE classes. Most of these teachers report finding the strategies – primarily readers and writers workshops – valuable for their students. They also report that the strategies can be challenging to implement. In this section of the report, we highlight teachers' first-year experiences with genre studies emphasizing, in particular, the use of these strategies with the lowest achieving students, those who are the primary target of the intervention.

The teachers with whom we spoke provided great detail about implementation. They spoke with passion about the demands of the work on their professional and personal lives. They provided multiple examples of what they had tried, why it had been more or less successful, how they were helped by the staff developers and other professional development, and what they might do next time to improve their work. These teachers, as we have noted before, are committed to doing the hard work required by the reform. Their determination to learn came through clearly in their words. So did their willingness to grant the district some leeway with what it provided and expected.

We begin with teachers' views of how teaching is different in genre studies and how their work is influenced by class size and the range of student achievement levels. Then we turn to the learning opportunities available to teachers (other than from staff developers) as they move forward with this work. We include a discussion of what additional knowledge, skill and support teachers would like. And, we review teachers' conclusions about the impact of genre studies on themselves and on their students.

What's Different About Genre Studies?

The teaching strategies intrinsic to genre studies require teachers to become less directive and more student-centered. (As a result, they require students to be more active as learners, to work

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[10]We remind the reader that the previous section of this update report that focused on the role of the staff developers, of course, was also focused on implementing genre studies. This section more directly addresses genre studies as a set of strategies in order to understand teachers' experiences with it as an approach to literacy instruction.

more independently.) They require teachers to use a range of literacy strategies that they might not have used in the past. Teachers point out the need to employ, for example, higher order questioning strategies and more sophisticated scaffolding so that students are prepared to work independently and in groups. Perfecting these new strategies, roles and relationships requires significant changes in teachers' practice. **The work is not easy; teachers report that it has significantly changed the ways in which they organize their classrooms and teach.**

> [Genre studies] made us much more aware of the questioning. We have to stop and think about asking good questions that get kids to really think about how they read and how they think about what they've read and how they comprehend. I think that was challenging. I really thought about that a lot this year. (Teacher D)

> When you ask kids to talk about text-to-personal experience, that really brings them into the literature. Having them talk about from text to text about literature, that works out okay. It's getting them to talk about the text work within itself [that's difficult]. And it's sort of furnishing enough support so they can make that jump and make some observations on their own, as opposed to just comparing and contrasting things with either personal experience or other text. To make some observations on their own about the text you have. And it's leading them down that road. And never having really been taught like that in my entire educational experience, it was difficult for me sometimes to lead them down that road. (Teacher A)

> [There is] definitely more cooperative learning, more kids working together, putting their ideas on chart paper. I'd say [what's new is] mainly the partner work, the grouping and having to change my reading strategy. That's changed in my teaching. I read fewer novels and more short stories so that the text is not long so that we can pick it apart along the way. That was a recommendation from the training. [Then] if we're trying to model to the students what we want them to write, then we need to pick more smaller pieces of literature so that they can follow what were asking them to do. (Teacher Z)

Although many of the teachers report that the new strategies include variations on ones with which they were familiar, overall, the requirements have been great and different, as this teacher's comment reveals.

> Maybe you could say this: the whole format of how to present it, organize it, pace it, everything is different. (Teacher FF)

The pedagogical strategies associated with genre studies require students to be more actively engaged in their learning and to take more responsibility for themselves. We wrote in our August 1999 update report that principals, teachers and Instructional Leaders were aware of the demands of the strategies embedded in the Literacy Framework. They pointed out that the Accountable Talk component would be very difficult to implement because it runs counter to

the ways in which most teachers organize their classrooms, present content and lead discussions. As one Instructional Leader explained:

> The big push for middle and high school, especially -- and the principals have really come to [this conclusion] themselves -- is that the Accountable Talk piece is really critical, especially when it comes to literacy. Children have really got to be trained by the teachers, and the teachers have got to know how to ask the right questions that pose the right circumstances for children to talk to each other, to question, to challenge, and to bump up their thinking in ways besides simple recall, which is where most of the kids are right now at middle school and high school. Kids are still doing the fact recall, raising their hand and answering the question, one-on-one with the teacher. [IL-E] (August 1999, p. 27)

Some teachers recognized a year ago that the depth and complexity that are the goal of Accountable Talk would require as much training and practice for students to do well as it would for teachers to acquire the desired level of discourse. **As teachers try to implement Accountable Talk as part of their genre studies work, they note the changes required of students as well as of themselves.**

> [Genre studies] requires the students to be more responsible. It's less directive teaching, teaching where the teacher is up in the front of the room. It's more that you have your little mini lesson, your short lesson. And then you send them off. And that's really a big change from the way I taught last year. It's a lot of one-on-one conferencing. And then, when you're conferencing with that student, the rest of the class is supposed to be on task! (Teacher BB)

> It takes a lot of training [for the students, too]. This is the first year throughout the district that they've been trying this approach. We'll probably see the kids more in tune with what's expected and how to do things and so forth [in a few years, when they come up from elementary school]. But even the workshop people who come from New York said, "Oh, you've got to spend three, four, five months sort of, quote, "training the children", unquote, getting them into how to, where to, why to." Because a lot of it is brand new, it's foreign to them. And that's been the case. (Teacher S)

Teachers report that **creating and sustaining these organizational components of the work in the context of large class size and with students who have not been asked to "do school" in this way requires a great deal of organization and management skill.** Those who have not used these strategies before suggest that it was a daunting task to put them in place.

> We were awed by the thought of kids moving around the room. The whole idea of the workshop, of having like little [elementary school] work stations and everybody just sort of wanders and is so sweet to one another and does whatever they want and works the whole time. That just was not reality. So we do have

groups and everybody is in a group with people that they basically don't talk to or don't like so that while they're in their area [they don't interact]. And it's very clear: You cannot be in a different group, you cannot sit anywhere else. It's very delineated. And there's no moving around whenever you want. It's "We move now. You read until we move back." (Teacher HH)

Class size, compounded by discipline problems prevent some teachers from being able to work effectively in the workshop format.

The biggest challenge that I have found is 30 students in the class. Because you end up with lots of behavior problems when you're dealing with those kids. And I think [the district] is addressing that so that there will be 20 in seventh grade and ninth grade. Ninth grade of course will have 20 for next year and that will help tremendously. Especially for group work. Getting kids in little groups of five would be much easier with only four of those to deal with. (Teacher C)

One of the challenges that I find with the shared reading and the read aloud and the whole guided reading...guided reading is really hard to do because you have a class of 35 students and you're supposed to try to work with either a small group or one or two individual students, one-on-one, to hear what their reading skills are, to evaluate, to assess, and then try to know where to go to help them improve. That's really hard to do when you have the rest of the class which....I have my weaknesses as a teacher, but I think one of strengths is I have pretty good classroom control as far as discipline is concerned. Yet, I still have a rowdy group of kids at least this year when I'm trying to do this new system. I'm over there working with a group of kids and I have them working on a task and everything's thought out and there's no room for going off track. But they still either talk or socialize. (Teacher Z)

The challenges posed by class size and discipline are especially salient when teachers have homogeneous classes comprised of Q1-Q2 students and/or large numbers of English Language Learners (ELL).

When you have heterogeneous grouping, you have leaders in the class and you have examples of really good work. And it's just better. You have some more maturity in the room. Q1, Q2 tend to be immature and they play off of each other. So when you have different levels in the room, it's just a better teaching situation. And it's just more realistic. I prefer the heterogenous grouping. (Teacher FF)

I think this year has gone amazingly well being a brand new program, a brand new try at this. I think both [of us] and the other teachers have found some amazing growth in our students. So in one way it has been successful, but it's been very stressful on us as teachers. The behavior management has come much more into play with all lower end students. There's never a couple of students that

> stand out as leaders and have leadership qualities. We've had to develop that as a whole another aspect in our own students. Which in one way is a good thing, but in another way, it's taken us that much more time. Like when we do literature circles or break into groups, it's been a lot more difficult to get going and have someone actually that can stay on top and lead. (Teacher CC)

> What also is different is that it is a homogeneous group of all low performers. And I see that desirable in many ways but I'm also learning that there's a lot of drawbacks to that. It's a mind adjustment for me, or just a perception adjustment to view the group as having no high responders. I'm not going to get that mix of some who will know or understand, who can work with this other one. So I'm constantly adjusting. I'm always finding my balance on this little tight wire in the lit block. That's new. (Teacher C)

> Because I teach social studies, my smallest class is 37. And into that one class of 37 I have 12 language learners. Some speak no English whatsoever. And my complaint is that the district is so focused on lowering the class size for English but students also learn English in social studies. And as long as our classes remain that large and with that kind of a mixture, I can see where there's not going to be much literacy being attained in those classes because they're just too large. Especially with that many language learners in there. (Teacher F)

Genre studies teachers know that their classes will be smaller in the 2000-2001 school year. Colleagues who are using genre studies in other grades will not have the opportunity to work with smaller numbers of students. Nor will teachers who teach either social studies or science. Thus, it is not clear how they will be able to use effectively these important literacy strategies.

Some teachers in our sample who work primarily with ELL students raised questions about how to use genre studies with their students. They reported being unsure of how to adapt the strategies in light of their students' particular needs and that they were not aware of any professional development geared to this issue.[11] In addition, they noted that finding appropriate materials – always a challenge for older ELL students who read at low levels – was especially challenging in the context of genre studies. However, teachers were working with their colleagues and with their staff developers to try the strategies in their classes.

> It just fits real nicely because a lot of the kids are low achieving and it's designed for low achieving kids. The only thing I would say about the literacy framework is that the ELL kids need more time in many of the strategies. Especially in the writing. That is brand new to them, you know. [Non-ELL students] do work in

[11]One teacher attended the beginning of district offered professional development during the summer of 1999 but said that the sessions were canceled due to limited enrollment. In our February 2000 update report we noted that staff developers want to know more about adapting genre studies for use in ELL classes and that they would welcome professional development in this area.

six weeks. We probably would need nine or ten weeks just on one strategy. Just in the writing part. The reading one, the kids are probably about the same as just regular kids. I've observed an actual genre studies class and I want to do the same thing. Because there are just many things that I agree with: the structure, doing it every day, the reading. The kids need to read all the time. (Teacher JJ)

I had to do a lot of work on it myself to get it reachable and touchable for my kids because it's hard for them. And [the staff developer] has been coming and helping me and giving me ideas. We're taking a poem and the kids are going to have to analyze it, interpret it, and review it and write their own analysis of it and turn it into the district. Those are all very big words for ELL kids: interpret, analyze, review. (Teacher NN)

Teachers who work with ELL students say that some of their CLAD training touches on teaching strategies related to the genre studies, but that what they learned was quite superficial. Those involved in the SDAI training report a greater connection between it and their actual classroom needs.

There's several of us here at the site that are taking the SDAI training now and we've had two sessions of it. I was thinking about it last night. We're getting a lot of strategies there that also fit right within the Genre Studies. They may call them different things, but pretty much it's all the same, except that in the SDAI training they're not putting that much focus on ways of teaching vocabulary. The instructor has said many times, "And this is where you would introduce the vocabulary," but has never gone into any kind of detail of ways to make it easier for ESL kids to learn vocabulary.... I've been trying some real fun things with these kids and I've taken a lot of things that were in the CORE and modified it, adding some of the SDAI training. (Teacher AA)

In our February 2000 report we noted that staff developers wanted to learn more about how to adapt the literacy strategies and genre studies in particular to better meet the needs of students who are learning English as a second language. Most teachers who work with ELL students want the same thing. On their own, they are trying to target the strategies to their students' levels and rate of learning. It would be helpful for teachers and staff developers for the Institute to devote some time to a) learning more about what ELL teachers and staff developers think they would like to know, and b) providing support so that they could gain that knowledge and skill.

Summary for What's Different about Genre Studies. These San Diego middle school teachers' voices reveal a genuine commitment to implementing genre studies with the hope that the strategies will improve their teaching and, thereby, students' learning. They have tried the new strategies knowing that they would be difficult and that they would not know all they needed to know at the outset. They have been supported in their efforts by their colleagues and with guidance from the staff developers. These teachers' feedback about a) the importance of class size to implementation, b) the issues pro and con around homogeneously grouping

students, c) concerns and questions associated with using the strategies with ELL, and d) the importance of readly resources merit consideration. Teachers comments should lead to a consideration of how to support students who pose significant behavioral difficulties and the teachers who work with them. And, these teachers' thoughts should lead the Institute to acknowledge the fact that some teachers will be expected to implement the literacy strategies and/or teach literacy in the content areas without the benefit of smaller class size. Finally, these teachers' thoughts, based on their efforts to implement genre studies during the 1999-2000 school year, can identify issues around which to focus professional development work in the next school year in the context of scaling-up its implementation.

Supports for Genre Study Implementation

The major component of teachers' professional development during the 1999-2000 school year was provided by staff developers. This professional development, by and large, was described in enthusiastic terms by teachers working to implement genre studies. (See Part II of this report.) In addition, teachers participated in summer 1999 professional development designed to enable them to begin implementing genre studies at the start of the school year, and, during the year, they participated in additional district sponsored workshops led by literacy consultants. Some teachers also observed colleagues implementing genre studies in an effort to broaden their own knowledge about what such classes could look like when implemented.

The teachers in our sample wanted to make their professional development useful to their practice. They found some of it highly valuable and some of it frustrating and contradictory. However, even when they found it lacking in some area, their orientation was to take what they learned and apply it as they could. Teachers deserve a lot of praise and credit for this attitude. As a result of their hard work, the district can learn a great deal to help it adapt genre studies professional development to the needs of teachers who will implement it in the coming years.

In the first part of this section, we briefly review teachers comments about professional development designed to assist them in implementing genre studies and note some of the additional help they say they need in order to do this work well. Finally, in the context of all of the hard work teachers have done, we review the ways in which they think implementing genre studies has influenced them and their students.

Learning to Teach Genre Studies. Teachers, like the staff developers we described in our February 2000 update report, agreed that the first genre studies professional development provided by literacy consultants in the summer of 1999 was insufficiently focused and organized to prepare them for the work ahead. Those who went to the second session, however, described the ways in which it prepared them to begin their work.

> It was the best training I've attended. We went with low expectations knowing the first one was bad. [The leaders] must have listened [to the feedback]. Because they did a really good job. [In the beginning], we just thought, "How much can they really tell us in a week? How many trainings have we been to that have been

> super helpful? ...[But] we just got so much out of it....[For] everything that was said at the training, we thought, "OK, would this work?" Because sometimes people train you and they say, "Oh, all the children will just naturally share." And you're like, "They will?" ...We said, "OK, wait. This is supposed to happen. Would we do it this way? How would we modify this? Could we make this happen with training?" We kind of like had the position that we need to try to make this work. And so instead of just saying, "Wow, this all sounds impossible," it was kind of like, "We have to do this. So we have to figure out a way to do it." (Teacher HH)

> It was very helpful, I felt much more prepared for starting the year. I felt like I had a jumpstart.... I appreciated the fact that they modeled a lot. We had a chance to start our own writers notebook and then I could use that as my model with my students this year. When I asked them to do it, I could say, "Well, let me give you an example. This is what I wrote about for my time line." That helped. (Teacher Z)

During this professional development, teachers became somewhat prepared, they said, to teach one genre: the memoir. When teaching this genre, they realized that they had no strategy for choosing the next genre nor time and expertise with which to develop the curriculum, the mini-lessons and the materials, for example. Teachers reported that they wished they had learned how to teach more than one genre during their summer professional development. They stressed the difficulty of trying to implement the first genre along with the new teaching strategies while developing the curriculum and finding the resources with which to teach the next. Although they described the staff developers as enormously helpful, teachers did not feel a) sufficiently prepared nor b) realistically able to do all of the work needed to implement genre studies throughout an entire school year.

> I was not trained as a curriculum specialist or a curriculum developer. I'm doing the best I can with the resources I have and the knowledge I have from classroom experience. But I'm not an expert. I don't know if I'm doing a good job or I'm not. And there are people who are skilled in that who should be doing that, you know? I think that maybe [they could come] from the Institute. (Teacher CC)

Other teachers shared this view and, in addition, connected the curriculum issues to those of standards and assessment. They pointed out that the strategies of genre studies alone, would not ensure that students are learning what they should at an appropriate level.

> By and large it's been a successful class. My big objection is that there is no standard curriculum. And there is no standard grading. It's the same thing that we've always dealt with and that we continue to deal with. And until we get rid of this problem, we won't have any real standards. I know that [other teachers] are grading their kids on a completely different level than I am. We're all just out there doing our own thing. And until we stop doing that there is no such thing as standards. (Teacher II)

> We have no means to have a scope and sequence and know who's doing what, on what level. It's just sort of out there, this genre studies. But do they tell you what sixth grade genre studies look like? [No!] So now the teachers are having to do that. That's a lot of time. That's a lot of energy. And that's not necessarily my area of expertise. But we are all getting together and grouping that and working on that. And I look at that, too. How are you being held accountable for student success, [without] the means to get there. (Teacher I)[12]

Teachers and staff developers at a few schools, with principal support, have taken the lead in addressing this issue by developing standards-based units that connect with genre studies. A teacher at one school described how this work engaged her and her colleagues in preparing for the 2000-2001 school year.

> We said, "Wait a minute. Let's come up with some genres that we think we might want to cover." So the grade level reps got together during the break and came up with a kind of a skeleton for a short story, a skeleton for poetry, a skeleton for a memoir, and what should we all be teaching in that. And then we divided into groups of three with a sixth grade person, a seventh grade person, and an eighth person. It's what we're working on now. We [want to be able to] say, "Yes, we want them to know setting, character, conflict, resolution . But how would that look different at sixth grade, seventh grade, and eighth grade?" We'll come up with some kind of scope and sequence or something close to that. And from that then we'll say, "OK, what are the mini lessons we're using? What are the resources we're using?" And then we'll put all of this out and people will have input, grade levels will say, "Yes I agree with this or no we want to make some changes." So we have a little binder with a way to start in September. Which is not what this year was at all! (Teacher K)

The curriculum development work described above is useful in that it provides teachers with an opportunity to learn more about genre studies while they are developing the units. In this way, such curriculum work also serves a professional development purpose.[13]

The teachers who voice concerns about the lack of curriculum and standards raise important points. We doubt, however, that it would have been possible to prepare teachers in one week, or

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[12]These teachers' comments suggest that the links between genre studies, the Literacy Framework and standards, more broadly may not be clear to teachers. In addition, they point to the fact that there are no clear performance standards with exemplars of student work with the exception, perhaps, of the literacy portfolio.

[13]In contrast, we also heard about efforts to provide teachers with ready-made units into which they had no input and which they were supposed to teach in a lockstep manner. We doubt this approach to providing teachers with curriculum will be effective because it actually prevents teachers from thinking about the genre in light of their students' interests and needs. In addition, the requirement to use a unit in this way angers teachers who want to be more thoughtful about their teaching.

even in several weeks, to implement a year-long genre studies program. Therefore, it was probably inevitable that the first set of teachers to do this work would experience the frustration of learning how to teach differently while having to develop fundamentally new curricula. It should be possible, in subsequent years, to evaluate and then share teacher developed genre studies units across the district with the idea of providing teachers with units they can adopt and adapt. It might also be possible for the Institute to "commission" the development of some genre units. In addition, it should be standard practice that the curriculum developed for genre studies – whether at the school or district level – be accompanied by explicit links to standards and assessments that include exemplars of work that meets district expectations on agreed upon rubrics.

School Year Professional Development. Teachers attended a number of workshops during the past school year and they described them as somewhat helpful in clarifying how to implement specific aspects of readers and writers workshop. With staff developers making the arrangements, teachers also observed colleagues – at their own and other schools – who were deemed somewhat expert at implementing genre studies. And some teachers used their Clark Foundation grants for small study groups in which they read and discussed professional books and considered how to use what they learned in the context of genre studies.

Although teachers were quite positive in their comments about the literacy focused workshops they attended, they pointed out that they were frustrated by hearing contradictory information about how to implement the various components of genre studies. For example, they reported hearing different information about a) how to connect genres with literacy strategies, b) whether and to what extent to have the whole class read the same book, and c) how to implement word study. While these teachers, who are eager to do the right thing for students, made the best of the different messages, they were frustrated. They did not know whether variations in implementation would make a difference and, if so, which approach would lead to the best results.

> There's been mixed messages coming from the district. The district brought in Ellin Keene who wrote Mosaic of Thought. And that's kind of been our bible; the book where we teach all our reading strategies from. And she said at the conference that you teach the reading strategies through all the different genres at one time. And yet we were also told to teach one strategy with each specific genre. (Teacher Y)

Some teachers reported that every time they heard a new speaker, they heard a new "twist" on what they had been told previously.

> I think the whole program is a work in progress. And, I think an overriding question is: Do you set it up around strategies? Do you set it up around genre? And if you do, what are those genres going to be? And that is something that could be real challenging because that's a philosophical debate as much as a

> pragmatic decision within the classroom. And so I just see that as being a challenge looming on the horizon. (Teacher JJ)

Teachers were also frustrated by the mixed messages about word study, word walls and what use to make of them. Some made their own decisions, often in consultation with staff developers, about how to use them. Others took a "wait and see" attitude as this teacher notes.

> It was like that they paid us $100 to take a class, they gave us that $25 or $30 book, and the first person to use it, they said, "That's not really what we want to see." So what did you give me a hundred bucks for? What did you give me the book for that's sitting at home? When you figure it out, tell me and I'll start doing it. (Teacher FF)

At the start of the 1999-2000 school year, teachers thought they were supposed to be implementing genre studies and its components in a uniform fashion. They understood, based on information they heard during the 1998-1999 school year, that the district expected all teachers to use the literacy strategies in exactly the same way and that professional development experts would tell them what to do and how to do it. As the year progressed, teachers said that they realized there was some flexibility in the reform and that the different consultant presentations reflected that flexibility. The example that arose several times concerned the use of whole-class novels, having all students reading the same book at the same time. As one teacher said, "In the fall, that was a 'no, no.' " However, in a recent talk, Janet Allen told them that there was nothing wrong with using a whole-class novel as long as they used the literacy strategies – the shared reading, mini-lessons, and Read-Alouds – along with it. This relieved teachers who now felt they could adapt the literacy framework to their students' needs.

We do not know what the Institute's position is on the ways in which the strategies should be implemented, although conversations with staff developers suggest that the Institute is aware that there are multiple ways to focus on the same literacy goals. We think it would be helpful to make the Institute's position clear to teachers, especially those who have accepted the premises on which the district's reform are based and are working so hard to implement them. Teachers (and principals) need answers to questions such as:

1. Is there one correct way to do genre studies?
2. What are the possibilities for variation?
3. Under what circumstances can teachers vary their implementation?

We raise these questions not because teachers want to work only in a compliance mode. Rather, we raise them because teachers are trying to figure out how to use the constellation of strategies they are learning in a coherent and effective way. The different messages coming from outside experts have left some of them confused about how to proceed.

What More Do Teachers Want to Know? In addition to wanting more clarity about how to deal with different consultants' ideas about strategies, teachers reported that they would like

more professional development and support around a few specific topics. Having tried, for example, mini-lessons and guided practice, teachers are quite clear that they need to develop further expertise with these strategies. The following teacher comments were echoed by many.

> **It's the mini-lessons. This language lesson. And how to keep the momentum going on what they are writing.** Every day you're supposed to have a mini-lesson. OK, what's it going to be today? Without a curriculum this is really, really difficult. I have just found it very hard to always have that [mini-lesson] ready to go and to have something that you think is significant to sort of run with every day. We have managed to have a very full program. I don't feel like the kids have wasted their time. But if I'm thinking about, for instance, what I'm going to do today, that's going to be the part that I'm going to be sweating. (Teacher II)

> In terms of my own development I think actually handling the independent reading time is something that was a weakness of mine that I've worked on and I think has gotten a lot better. **Now I would like to strengthen my coaching skills with respect to individual reading strategies, for the mini lessons.** (Teacher JJ)

> **The only thing I would like is more help with the guided practice strategy.** I feel weakest in that area because I can't keep the rest of them under control while I'm working with them one on one, or two, three whatever. I feel good about the Read Aloud and the shared reading....[The staff developer's] been great; she really has given me feedback. She really helped me get it all set up...But I'd say guided reading practice. [I need] more help on that. (Teacher Z)

In addition to help with these areas, almost every teacher mentioned the need for more assistance finding appropriate materials. Many credit their school librarians and staff developers with making enormous efforts to help in this area. Nonetheless, teachers seek more help and support with this area.

> **Even more books.** This year it was a huge boon to get the number of books that we got and to be able to go out and purchase them at a time when I already had a sense of where my students were at and what they liked. And I took requests and I fulfilled their requests when I did it. But [I need] even more because they had voracious appetites and they devoured [the books] pretty quickly. **More books that would be appropriate for ESL students in the genre studies context. I'm having a lot of trouble finding books that are appropriate subject matter but the right reading level.** (Teacher JJ)

> It's challenging in that the logistics end of this thing is nonexistent. And it's not intentional poor support. **But we do not have the materials, the class size, the resources to really implement this concept appropriately.** We're building to that. ...And it's challenging because we're having to research and dig up stuff or

talk to each other. It's a lot more teacher get out and dig and find something. (Teacher S)

Teachers comments about their learning and their struggles point out that they are trying to make use of whatever they learned. Their voices suggest a commitment to learning and working hard to improve student learning. We heard almost no one argue with the thrust of the district's reform agenda nor with the strategies that they were being asked to use. Teachers recognized that the changes they were being asked to make were quite difficult (although a few denied this) but their words revealed the considerable extent to which they were committed to making the needed changes.

Impact of Implementing Genre Studies on Teachers

The teachers in our sample, and many others with whom we did not talk, have worked extremely hard to implement genre studies. As the data reveal, they have had to change their teaching strategies as well as the materials and curriculum with which they work. They have had to change the organization of their classrooms and their expectations for student participation in order to more deeply engage students in their own learning. None of this work has been easy.

Teachers have stuck with this hard work because they know it is required and because they have had the support of the staff developers. They have also stuck with it because they think it makes sense. We noted even at the end of the first year of implementing the Literacy Framework (June 1999), before the advent of genre studies, that teachers believed the strategies they were being asked to try made a lot of sense and were likely to help their students learn.

As the district begins the second year of genre studies and expands the provision of staff developers, we think it is important to be mindful of the impact implementation has had on teachers; to be mindful of the stress as well as the rewards of taking on the work of fundamentally changing the ways in which they teach. Toward this end, we present representative voices of three teachers who speak about the way in which the reform took over their lives.

I feel that this year I've had no life outside of literacy blocks. I wake up in the middle of the night, come awake [thinking about this]. In the morning I'm brushing my teeth, I'm thinking about what to do and how to do it. It's dominated my life this year. I think I'll feel more confident and at ease working with the literacy blocks. But boy, it's been a struggle. ...It's been a challenge and it's kind of taken over my life for a year. (Teacher D)

None of us have lives. We develop what we are going to teach from scratch. We have to find the resources we need in the classroom. We tried the shared reading. We had to find resources for that. And the word study's been a real mismatch and fit, and yet we know we need to be doing it. (Teacher CC)

> I am surprised that I haven't experienced an overwhelming burnout. Because if I had predicted how I would be able to deal with this...I consistently work ten hour days in the classroom and take work home. I have no life. At this point in the year, I can hardly carry on a conversation unless it's about school. There just is nothing else going on. And [doing this work] really seems to demand that level of dedication and hours. I have been saying all year, "Well, this is the first year and it'll be different next year." I kind of feel now that it will probably be another year of the same thing before it eases up a little. So it is demanding in that way. (Teacher C)

These teachers represent, primarily, those who work with Q1-Q2 students in their genre studies classes. Teachers who tried genre studies with GATE students reported that, initially, they worried about how to insure that their children were learning as much as in the past. As the year went on, they realized that the true challenge was their own ability to keep up with their quick-learning students as this exchange reveals.

> *Teacher EE:* I felt like I was just treading water at the beginning of the year. I don't know if upset's the word, but I was nervous.
> *Teacher FF:* I had a lot of anxiety.
> *Teacher EE:* I didn't know where I was going to get all this material. I didn't know how I was going to change my 15 years of how I do things.
> *Teacher FF:* It's like you're in quicksand. You can't read and research and learn the genre, the way you're supposed to teach a genre, as fast as you have to teach it. *Teacher EE:* And with these kids, we've got to stay on top. We have to keep moving. Normally by the end of the period they're going to get it. We have to have something new to take them ahead the next day. So we don't have that luxury of saying, "Okay, they didn't get it today. I need to just refocus so they do it the next day." I think that's what scared me the most: keeping ahead of the students when I didn't know exactly where I was going.

These GATE teachers reported that, "Overall, the way they want us to do it is better, yes." But this realization did not diminish the genuine difficulties and emotional costs attached to doing the work.

We wonder whether it is reasonable to base the implementation strategy on the expectation that all teachers will commit this level of effort to the enterprise. If it is not likely, as we suspect, it might be worthwhile for the Institute to consider a phase-in of genre studies. Perhaps teachers could be supported to implement two genre studies units in the coming year, for example, rather than be expected to use the strategies throughout the year. This, or some other more measured but deliberate approach might ultimately be more effective with a wider range of teachers.

As the next teachers' comments reveal, taking on new strategies often made teachers aware of the severe limitations of what they had thought were good ways of teaching.

> I'm definitely sold on the structure and the proximity [meaning that students should be near the teacher during reading]. And being someone who's done what I thought was shared reading the last five years, and wondering why they weren't following along... And having kids back there at a table, back there. I can't imagine how I thought that they'd listen. And their engagement is such a big thing. [Engagement] was one thing I was struggling with as a teacher in the last couple of years. It's like, hey, it's a good book we're reading. How come they're not into it? [And now I know] it's because I'm way [far] over here. (Teacher GG)

> I am a better teacher now than I was back in September and that's what it's all about. It's hard to do after 16 years, though. My job description has changed from being an English teacher to being a reading English teacher. That is the huge change. I don't think I saw myself as really being a reading teacher. (Teacher A)

These teachers are committed to doing a much better job of teaching the students in their classes. They have worked inordinately hard to try the strategies the district has determined will help and it has taken an enormous amount of energy and dedication to do so. It is not clear that these teachers will be able to sustain this level of work for many more years, but it is likely that a) as they become more skillful with the strategies, and b) as the materials and other resources they require become available, implementation will become more like standard practice. What is likely to keep these teachers going in the meantime, is their conviction that the new practices are having a meaningful, positive impact on students.

Impact of Literacy Framework and Genre Studies on Students

Teachers point to students increased levels of engagement with the work of reading and writing as direct evidence that genre studies are having a positive impact. This is not surprising since it is so much more exciting for teachers when they see that their students are eager to do the work of learning.

> **The students are much more engaged in their reading now than they were at the beginning of the year**, and I think it's more than just the natural normal maturing that goes on during the seventh grade year. They've finally surrendered to [the reality that] it's not going to go away. (Teacher C)

> **The kids love it. They almost never say they're bored. They never say, "When is this class over." I mean, *almost* never.** And that's never been my experience as a teacher [before]. But just the format, the whole a) meet, b) learn something in a mini lesson, c) go out and practice it, d) have independent time where you get to choose what you're reading, e) choose what you're writing, f) work on it, g) get feedback, h) then, you publish your writing and everybody loves it....It flows. (Teacher HH)

I definitely did [see an increased interest in reading]. Some kids are also carrying books around and that seems really good. I don't know how much they read outside, but I know at least they're interested because they get to choose. I think that's the key: that the kids get to choose. (Teacher KK)

Teachers have given some thought to what it is about genre studies that has led to this visible student outcome. Although they say they cannot be sure, they emphasize the ways in which the strategies a) give students choice and, therefore, buy-in to their reading and writing, b) provide conferencing and other teacher-student interactions that personalize learning, and c) make reading more accessible by making transparent the reading strategies that good readers use. And, as some teachers note, it is the combination of the strategies, not just each one alone, that leads to the positive outcomes.

The conferring, reading and conferencing. I think it's made a big difference. I think it really has. And we devote a lot of our time to that....They really do like talking about the book. They really do like digging something up for the next week. And they go through a lot of books. I've been happy about that. They seem willing to try a couple directions I send them in. And I'm getting much bolder on that. I'm sending them in wider directions than I used to without too much concern. **And [I think it matters] they actually know what those terms mean and they are willing to use that language, like inference and prediction. And all those things. So learning the metacognitive strategies then also gives the students their own strategies.** (Teacher B)

They are into the books they have. They go home and use the sticky notes. They come in before class and say, "[Miss Y], I have some questions I want to go over with you." "When did you come up with them?" "Oh, last night." Oh, my gosh!..To be honest with you, it's just so interesting to see that they, all of a sudden, are into reading. **I think it might be the fact that I go around and I confer during that time. And when I confer, I write down everything the kid tells me. It's kind of like I'm interviewing them. They get to tell me everything they read. And it's almost like making them important.** And they're excited about that because I get to listen and they get to talk. (Teacher Y)

It is a more student centered education and [they have] more ownership. Just today I had two of my kids who submitted work for a poetry contest....We've made several books of their work to be published. I mean, there's purpose to what they're doing. It's no longer just because they have to or just because they have to pass the test. It's the ownership and the purpose. (Teacher OO)

I've taught directly the meta-cognitive strategies so I have vocabulary that I use with my students and that they pick up so quickly it amazes me. They actually know what those things mean and they are willing to use that language, like inference and prediction. So learning the metacognitive

> strategies then also gives the students their own strategies. I think what most motivates my students is the shared reading where they are reading the text as I read it aloud. We have the advantage of being able to choose a good text that the students will enjoy, and we're able to do some good thinking, and it's a little deeper. (Teacher C)

> I've seen a change. I think that the kids are more-- because these things are now being brought to their attention, the strategy that they're using. And we didn't learn that way, but they're learning that way. **And I think they're really conscious of what they're doing in their reading. And I think that a lot more of them are reading and really understanding what they're doing in their reading and understanding what they're reading.** (Teacher MM)

It's easy to hear the teachers' enthusiasm in their comments about students' responses to genre studies. Their own sense of efficacy seems to have expanded as they see their students become more engaged and competent as readers.

At the same time, teachers are disappointed that the same students who appear eager to read and are reading and using the literacy strategies are not yet showing improvement on standardized tests.

> Well I think, this is where it all kind of breaks down for me. Because it's sad. I have seen so much growth just in talking to the kids. Their attitude towards reading is obvious. Kids are coming in and asking, "May I please check out a new book." Through conferring with them I think we're seeing a lot of growth too. But this is where I get really sad. The tests, the SAT 9 and the SDRT or whatever that's called, don't really show us a lot of growth for our students. (Teacher GG)

Finally, there are still students who have not yet been turned onto reading by the new teaching strategies. Teachers consider the problem, largely, motivational and do not know how to address it. These students present a significant challenge to teachers (and to staff developers) even while teachers are seeing many more students than ever before begin to enjoy reading and become more competent at it.

Summary: Implementation of Genre Studies. Teachers found it challenging, all-consuming, and fruitful to implement genre studies for the first time. It was challenging because the teaching strategies embedded in the concept were new for most teachers who had to learn a) how to rely on more small group and individual instruction, b) use new questioning strategies, and, c) help students engage themselves in new levels of participation and responsibility. In addition, while doing all of this, teachers had to develop new genres and find appropriate materials with which to teach them. But, implementation was also fruitful because teachers saw themselves get better at these new literacy strategies and they saw positive results in their students. Many teachers reported that their students were more engaged with reading, seemed to

actually like it, and were more able to articulate the strategies they could use to get meaning from text. These are considerable accomplishments for teachers and students during the first year of implementation.

Teachers were helped immeasurably in these efforts by the staff developers whose on-site support enabled them to get better at genre studies over the course of the year. In addition, teachers were helped by a number of other professional development opportunities which included workshops, consultants' visits, and observations of peers who were also working to implement genre studies. Although teachers talked about the "mixed messages" they heard about using specific literacy strategies, overall they felt that the professional development was valuable and that, if they, indeed, could use what they were learning with some flexibility based on their professional judgment, then they could consider the "mixed messages" as beneficial.

Teachers do not think they have learned all they need to know to become independent of the staff developers. They worry, as do the staff developers, about whether they will have enough support in the second year of implementation to help them refined what they tried the first year. In particular, teachers want more staff developer help in formulating and teaching mini-lessons, implementing guided practice, and independent reading, for example. They would like the staff developers' help in finding resources for their students. And, they want some clarity on the issues such as how to integrate the strategies with the genres. Teachers want to know, for example: Should they focus on teaching students how to draw inferences for a period of time and then switch to another strategy? Or, should they weave instruction on inferences throughout the teaching of the each genre? We imagine that the Institute, through the work of the staff developers, will be able to clarify such issues for teachers.

At the end of the 1999-2000 school year, it was clear that teachers had worked hard. Yet, they were looking forward to teaching genre studies again to improve their skill and to see even greater improvements in students' learning. They, and all of the staff developers and Institute staff who support them, should be please with the results of their investment in genre studies.

III. STAFF DEVELOPERS' VIEWS OF IMPLEMENTATION

In Education Matters' February 2000 update report, we wrote about the staff developers' views of their work with teachers. In this report, we switched perspectives and focused on teachers' views of their work with the staff developers. The views are consistent and complement each other. Together, they tell the story of an effective partnership oriented toward improving teaching and learning in San Diego's middle schools.

During our May 2000 data collection visit, we interviewed staff developers as well as teachers. Some of the interviews were with staff developers we had spoken with in February; some were new to our sample. These interviews brought us up to date on how the staff developers were working with teachers in the second half of the school year. And, it enabled us to find out whether the issues that staff developers raised in the late fall were still salient to them. We focused our analysis, primarily, on staff developers work with teachers rather than on the quality

of their own professional development or their work with principals. We did this in order to be sure that, at the end of the first year of implementation, we had adequately captured the ways in which teachers and staff developers work together and the areas that each suggest are worthy of further attention.

Therefore, in this part of the report, we revisit some issues that we raised in February and we identify several additional concerns raised by the staff developers near the end of the school year.[14]

Continuing Concerns

1. **Staff developers still report they have a difficult time finding challenging and appropriate literacy materials for ESL students**. Some staff developers, in addition, would like professional development that makes explicit the links between the Literacy Framework and the work of helping ELL learn high level literacy skills. Not all staff developers are sufficiently knowledgeable about the issues involved in teaching, for example, vocabulary to ELL students. Nor do they know how to establish appropriate pacing guidelines and benchmarks for these students and their teachers. Many staff developers would like more professional development related to these issues.

2. As the year progressed, staff developers located more genre studies materials and made them available to teachers. Still, **they report that finding and making available appropriate and sufficient genre studies materials remains a challenge.**

3. We reported in February 2000 that staff developers said it was difficult to effectively coach teachers to use strategies such as Accountable Talk. **Staff developers reported that it was still difficult to help teachers learn to use the higher level questioning strategies required by the Literacy Framework.** As we reported in Part II of this report, teachers, too, said that they find it difficult to implement these strategies. Staff developers know that coaching teachers will take time; that they cannot merely "tell" teachers what to do or even demonstrate. They agree that they might benefit from additional coaching on how to facilitate teachers' competence with these strategies. In addition, it would be helpful for the Institute to engage staff developers in a discussion of a) what makes this work difficult for teachers, and b) how long it should take before teachers become competent at it.

4. **Staff developers reminded us that they are increasingly aware that it can take a long time to change teachers' practice even when teachers are willing participants in the effort. In addition, they reiterated their concerns about new teachers' capacity to manage their classes as well as learn to use genre studies.** At the end of the school year, some staff developers were surprised by how little change they had seen in some experienced teachers'

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[14]To fully explore the issues that staff developers raised in December 2000, the reader is referred to Education Matters' Update Report of 2/15/00.

classrooms. They were puzzled by teachers who said they attempted what the staff developer demonstrated but whose practice looked unchanged. They were frustrated at still having to work on classroom management skills with new teachers and by how little they had been able to do that directly addressed genre studies. As with #3 above, we think it would be helpful for the Institute to engage staff developers in discussions around these issues in order to better understand the problems and, perhaps, create new intervention strategies.

5. We wrote in February 2000 that staff developers (and principals) were aware that teachers did not know how the pieces of the Literacy Framework, including genre studies and the Reading Portfolio fit into a coherent whole. Although we did not ask teachers about their understanding during our May visit, **staff developers, once again, reminded us that there are still teachers who think they are being asked to implement discrete pieces of literacy instruction that do not quite fit together.**

6. **Staff developers are concerned about the scale-up of their work.** They know that schools will have more staff developer support in the 2000-2001 school year, but they also know that they will be responsible for additional work with new teachers. Importantly, they know that they will begin to work with some teachers who are not so eager to implement genre studies.[15] **Staff developers wonder, first, how they will allocate their time to have the greatest impact.** They know that their work with the teachers they coached during the 1999-2000 school year is not complete. Yet, they will have to devote significant amounts of time to teachers who are new and to experienced teachers who have not yet had much on-site support. **Second, staff developers wonder how to allocate time to experienced teachers – those who are eager to learn as well as those who may be reluctant.** By this time, the district may have addressed these issues of time allocation with the staff developers. If it has not, we encourage an open discussion and a return to this issue as the year progresses. **In addition, we remind the Institute that many staff developers continue to want professional development focused on coaching strategies that would support their work with a wider range of teachers, most particularly with those who are not eager to take on the difficult work of changing their practice.**

7. **Staff developers remain unsure of the standards, rubrics and benchmarks that will be used to evaluate their work.** They know that principals evaluate them, but they are vague about the specifics. It is important that the Institute, if it has not done so already, develop a staff developer assessment instrument that will make the indicators and criteria clear. It would be useful also, we think, for the Institute to discuss with the staff developers the way in which they will be evaluated in light of the capacity for reform present in the schools at the start of their work.

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[15]Teachers pointed out the benefit of staff developers working only with those who wanted help. They thought it was a sign of staff developer' sensitivity that they did not push themselves onto teachers who did not want their help. We agree that this was a fine strategy for the first year; it will not be effective, however, as the Institute knows, to base the scale-up on waiting for teachers to seek professional development help.

Additional Issues

1. **Staff developers reported that principals took them away from their work with teachers for several weeks at a time to have them a) help with the implementation of tests, and b) complete other administrative work such as ordering books.** We heard the same report from teachers who regretted that the staff developers were unable to work with them for extended periods of time. While we understand why principals may have used staff developers in this way, we suggest that the practice merits discussions with principals. We think that using the staff developers in these ways, in addition to taking them away from their coaching work, sends the wrong message about priorities to staff developers and teachers, alike.

2. In the discussion of "continuing concerns" above, we noted that staff developers wanted help with strategies to teach teachers how to use good questioning techniques. In addition, **staff developers reported that they were not sure how to help teachers to relinquish some control of their classes to students so that they could actually implement genre studies**. They were frustrated by how difficult teachers found this component of reform and unsure about how to proceed. Related to this concern, **several staff developers reported that they were dismayed by the amount of time and coaching it will likely take to enable teachers to implement genre studies.** They were newly aware of the intensity of coaching that some teachers will require and, therefore, the amount of time it will take to effectively scale-up the reforms.

3. **Staff developers pointed out the need to develop teacher leadership for sustaining and nurturing new practices**. The literacy strategies that teachers are learning are not designed explicitly to create a collaborative, instructionally focused culture in schools, but they are leading to that outcome in a number of schools in our sample. This is because teachers are engaged with one another in school-based professional development and, for example, in the process of developing and implementing genre studies. As a result of their work, some teachers are emerging as leaders within their departments and teams. Staff developers suggest that this is a good thing and that these teachers should be supported in acquiring skills that will help them become, in a sense, staff developers for their colleagues. We agree that schools will do well to nurture teachers' capacity to sustain as well as advance the work being led by the staff developers. Expanded school capacity will benefit students as well as teachers; it will enable staff developers, perhaps, to spend more of their time with the teachers most in need of assistance.

4. **Staff developers want to find a way to acknowledge and reward the hard work being done by so many teachers**. We agree with the staff developers. The teachers in our sample, for example, devoted huge amounts of time and energy to implement genre studies. Their hard work and dedication have led the district, no doubt, to be smarter about the scale-up process and more cognizant of what supports staff developers and teachers still need. In addition, these teachers have shown an enormous commitment to their students; they have demonstrated their belief that all students can learn if teachers know better how to teach them. Surely, this is worthy of recognition.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Education Matters began interviewing teachers and principals in the San Diego City Schools (SDCS) during the 1993-1994 school year. Over the next four years we spoke with many articulate, thoughtful teachers and principals about the district's approach to implementing a portfolio culture and aspects of standards-based reform. We wrote reports in which we highlighted their understanding of the district's goals and processes and the way in which professional development was supporting them in implementing, in particular, portfolios and standards. We stressed in the findings that there was a) considerable confusion among teachers and principals about the district's focus and strategy for implementing these reforms, and b) little professional development that gave them guidance about the ways in which the reforms might influence their practice. In contrast, interviews with SDCS teachers and principals during the 1999-2000 school year reveal great clarity about the district's goals and strategies as well as considerable support for the professional development designed to help teachers understand and implement them. As is clear from the previous sections of this report, teachers working with staff developers find their expertise well-suited to the district's agenda and to their professional development needs.

We have also been struck by the detail with which teachers can now talk about their work. Assuredly, there were always some teachers who were heavily invested, for example, in portfolios who could talk about their purpose, how they were linked to standards, and the ways in which they involved students in creating portfolios. What is different, now, is that not just a few, but virtually all of the forty-two teachers in our sample, can articulate the details of the literacy work underway, the specific strategies they are implementing, the challenges of the work and what they want to learn next. The reform agenda is present and discernible. We do not mean to say that all of the components are clear to all teachers nor that all teachers understand how to implement them. Rather, we stress there is clarity about the goals and purpose, considerable early understanding of the strategies to be used, and a conviction that the district is serious and working hard to support teachers with professional development and other resources that will make implementation possible, if not easy. Put even more directly, teachers' talk about their literacy instruction is more detailed and more reflective than we have heard in the past. We consider this an essential indicator of the progress of implementation, of the hard work of so many in San Diego who are determined to have its students meet the high standards necessary for their success.

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